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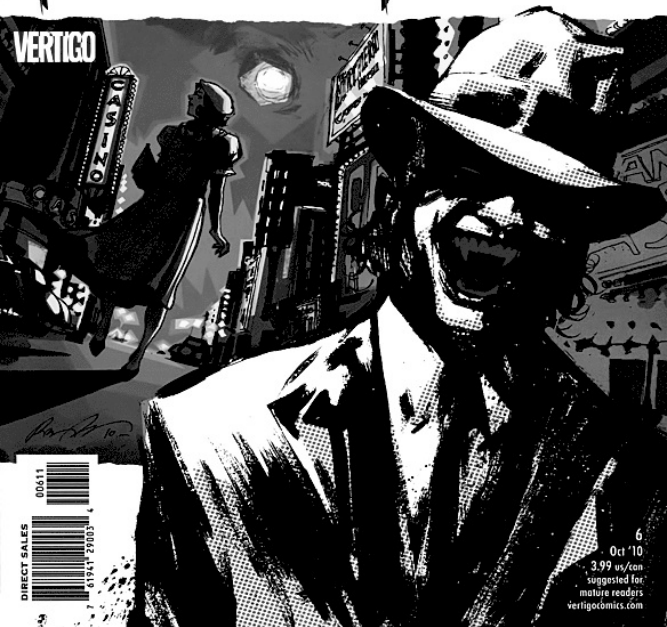
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SCOTT SNYDER RAFAEL ALBUQUERQUE

AMERICAN VAMPIRE

VERTIGO



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R. GRAMPA

Silverton, Colorado, 1936.





AMERICAN VAMPIRE

DEVIL IN THE SAND PART ONE

WRITER: SCOTT SNYDER ARTIST: RAFAEL ALBUQUERQUE
COLORS: DAVE MCCAIG LETTERS: STEVE WANDS
COVER: RAFAEL ALBUQUERQUE EDITOR: MARK DOYLE
AMERICAN VAMPIRE CREATED BY SCOTT SNYDER

Las Vegas, Nevada. 6 months earlier...



Later...



WHEN I WAS A BOY, I USED TO HAVE NIGHTMARES ABOUT MONSTERS HIDING IN THE SHADOWS OF MY BEDROOM.

I USED TO WAKE UP SCREAMING AND STILL SEE THEM EVERYWHERE, IN EVERY DARK CORNER.

I WOULDN'T GO BACK TO SLEEP UNTIL MY FATHER LIT THE LAMPS AND PROVED THE CORNERS AND CLOSETS WERE ALL CLEAR.

I'M A MAN NOW. I RECENTLY LAID MY FATHER TO REST AND WHEN I CAN'T SLEEP, I GO WALKING.

LOOKING AROUND, I'M STRUCK BY HOW BRIGHT THE DAMN NIGHT'S BECOME. IT MAKES ME WONDER...

OR DO THEY SIMPLY LEARN HOW TO LIVE IN THE LIGHT?

WHAT HAPPENS TO THOSE CHILDHOOD MONSTERS WHEN THERE ARE NO MORE SHADOWS TO HIDE IN? DO THEY LEAVE? DO THEY MOVE ON?



TOP OF
THE MORNING,
CASHIEL. OR
IS IT BOTTOM
OF THE
EVENING?

I
DON'T
KNOW
ANYMORE,
BERNIE.
MILK?

JUST
DELIVERED.
FRESH AND
COLD, AND
HOW'S
THINGS?



YOU SEE
THE NEW SIGN THE
MOWANK HOTEL PUT
UP? WITH ALL THE
LIGHTS?

OUR BED-
ROOM WINDOW
LOOKS RIGHT
AT IT.



OUCH.

HEY,
PRICE OF
GROWTH.



EXACTLY. THE PAGES ARE
CALLING IT THE DEPRESSION--
NOT A, THE. TIMES ARE BLACK
EVERYWHERE. EXCEPT WHERE?
RIGHT HERE.

SO SOME
FOLKS COMPLAIN,
BUT I SAY BLESS THE
DAM. GOD BLESS IT,
IT'S A RAY OF
LIGHT.

GROCERIES
MEAT

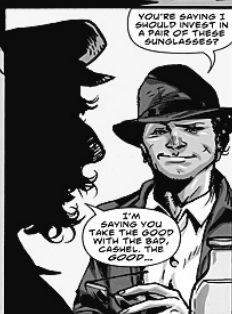


...WITH THE
BAD.

HOW CAN
I HELP YOU
GENTLEMAN?



YOU CAN START
BY TELLING US
WHERE YOU KEEP
YOUR GIGGLE
JUICE.



YOU'RE SAYING I
SHOULD INVEST IN
A PAIR OF THESE
SUNGLASSES?

I'M
SAVING YOU
TAKE THE GOOD
WITH THE BAD,
CASHIEL. THE
GOOD...







Las Vegas Police Department.



NOW IF YOU
AIN'T YOUR FATHER'S
SON... IT'S CALLED A
PAY OFF FOR A
REASON.

TRICK OF
THE LIGHT, GLEN.
I'M NOT REALLY
HERE.

ACTUALLY,
IT'S A GOOD
THING YOU
ARE,
BECAUSE
WE GOT--

UH-UH,
LIKE I TOLD
YOU. JUST
PASSING
THROUGH
CELL?

YOU CAN
TRY 4, BUT
YA'LL MIGHT
HAVE TO
SQUEEZE.

LORD
CHRIST.

GUESS YOU'LL
HAVE TO LET US GO,
HUM, CHIEF?



THIS AIN'T
PROPER AND
YOU KNOW
IT!



WE GOT
RIGHTS! THIS
IS A DAMN
CLOSET!

BLESS
THE DAM...





AGENT STRAW
AND MISS BOOK, THIS
IS CASHEL MCCOGAN,
OUR NEW CHIEF OF
POLICE.

DON'T LET
THE BABY FACE
FOOL YOU, THOUGH, HE
COMES FROM A LONG
LINE OF NEVADA
LAWMEN.



I HEARD, YOUR
FATHER WAS GUS
MCCOGAN, CHIEF
FOR 35 YEARS.

36, ACTUALLY.
RIGHT UP UNTIL HE
WAS KILLED IN THE
STREET TWO
MONTHS AGO.



I READ ABOUT THAT
TOO, THE SHOOTING...
I'M SORRY, JUST KNOW
THAT WE'RE HERE TO
ASSIST YOU IN ANY
WAY YOU NEED.



GOOD. HOW ABOUT YOU
START BY GOING BACK
AND GETTING MORE
OF YOU?

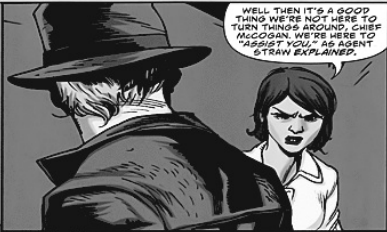


WE'RE GOOD
AT WHAT WE DO,
CHIEF MCCOGAN, I'M A
20-YEAR VETERAN
AND--

THAT'S ALL
FINE AND GOOD,
BUT IN CASE YOU
HAVEN'T NOTICED,
WE'RE DROWNING
HERE.



SO ONE AGENT,
EVEN A TOP-NOTCH
HEAD-BUSTING G-MAN--
AND HIS CRACKERJACK GIRL
ASSISTANT--AIN'T GOING
TO BE ENOUGH TO TURN
THINGS AROUND.



WELL THEN IT'S A GOOD
THING WE'RE NOT HERE TO
TURN THINGS AROUND, CHIEF
McCOGAN. WE'RE HERE TO
"ASSIST YOU," AS AGENT
STRAW EXPLAINED.



BECAUSE IN THE END, IT'S YOUR
CITY. YOUR JOB TO KEEP IT
UNDER CONTROL.



OH, WE WERE
KEEPING IT UNDER
CONTROL JUST
FINE, SEE...

...THAT IS UNTIL THE
U.S. GOVERNMENT--YOU
GUYS--DECIDED TO BUILD
THE LARGEST ENGINEERING
PROJECT IN THE HISTORY
OF THE COUNTRY RIGHT
HERE IN OUR BACKYARD...



...WITHOUT GIVING
US A DIME TO
EXPAND THE
POLICE FORCE
ACCORDINGLY.

IT'S CALLED
PROGRESS.

UH,
CHIEF?



GOT
SOMETHING
ELSE... HATE TO
EVEN TELL YOU
ABOUT IT, BUT IT
SOUNDS PRETTY
BAD. HOMICIDE
AT THE PEABODY
HOTEL.



THAT'S ALL RIGHT
GLEN. I'LL TAKE ALONG
AGENT STRAW AND--WHAT
WAS IT? MISS BOOK?
SHOW THEM SOME OF
THAT "PROGRESS"
UP CLOSE.







I TAKE IT YOU KEEP
A GUEST REGISTRY FOR
VISITORS, MR. STAR.



WE DO, YES,
BUT FOR SPECIAL
GUESTS LIKE MR.
BEAULIEU--FOR FRIENDS
OF THE HOTEL--WE
ALLOW FOR MORE
PRIVACY.



I'M SURE
MR. BEAULIEU
APPRECIATES YOUR
PROTECTING HIS
PRIVACY. BUT DO
ME A FAVOR, WILL
YOU? CALL IN THAT
ELEVATOR BOY
WHO RODE US
UP HERE.



OF
COURSE.



A DEAD CONSORTIUM
MAN... WITH THREE WEEKS UNTIL
THE RIBBON CUTTING FOR THE DAM.
TELL ME YOU'LL SOLVE THIS
QUICK, CHIEF MCCOGAN.



OF COURSE, DEPUTY
MAYOR FRANK. WE GOT TO
GIVE YOU AND YOURS ENOUGH
TIME TO BLOW UP ALL THEM
BALLOONS.



NOW LET'S
COVER HIM UP
BEFORE THE BOY
COMES IN.



SO BEAULIEU WAS AN
IMPORTANT MAN.



A DAM LIKE THE
ONE BEING BUILT UP RIVER
IS TOO BIG A PROJECT FOR
ANY ONE COMPANY,
AGENT STRAW.



TO MAKE A BID FOR ALL THAT
SWEET FEDERAL FUNDING, FOUR
DIFFERENT FIRMS CAME TOGETHER
AND FORMED WHAT THEY CALL
"THE
CONSORTIUM." THEY'RE EQUAL
PARTNERS IN THE BUILDING
OF THE THING.



HOWARD BEAULIEU
WAS ONE OF THE
FOUR CONSORTIUM
HEADS. SO YES,
YOU COULD SAY HE
WAS ABOUT AS
IMPORTANT TO
LAS VEGAS AS
THEY COME.



CHIEF
MCCOGAN?







Block 16, Las Vegas'
Red Light District.



MY GOD...
I'D HEARD
REPORTS, BUT
THIS...

IMPRESSIVE.
AIN'T IT?

THEN AGAIN, YOU
GOT 3,000 WORKERS
TOILING ON A DAM JUST
OUTSIDE TOWN, YOU GOT
TO GIVE THEM SOME-
PLACE TO BLOW
OFF SMOKE.

WELCOME
TO THE SMOKIEST
DAMN NEIGHBORHOOD
IN THE UNITED
STATES.



TAKE US TO
HIM.



YOU REALLY
WANT TO DO THIS
DANCE AGAIN,
ANGEL?





'MORNING,
OFFICERS...

...HOW
CAN I BE OF
SERVICE?

To be
Continued...

-SANDER / ALBUQUERQUE-



ON THE EDGE

EDITORIAL BY
MAT JOHNSON

I wrote **DARK RAIN** during a hurricane called "Ike," evacuated to Austin, Texas.

awash in uncertainty and memories of Katrina just three years earlier. I live in Houston, Texas, on the Gulf Coast, which is basically a bowling alley for hurricanes every summer. That's just our reality.

I spent Hurricane Katrina like a lot of people, at home, watching it unfold on the cable news. Afterwards, I heard a lot of talk about the future of New Orleans and the Gulf Coast, and there were those who seemed to think the area wasn't worth the cost of saving it, that America should just cut New Orleans loose as if it were a withered branch. I heard many different types of people say this but they all had one thing in common: They'd never truly been there. The purpose of **DARK RAIN**, for me, was to change that.

Simon Gane breathed life into **DARK RAIN** with his amazing illustration style. He also brought himself all the way over from Bath, England to see NOLA up close, and I joined him, driving the same path from Houston that our lead characters, Emmitt and Dabny, try to take on their way to pull off a bank heist that they hope will give them each a second chance in life.

Together Simon and I cruised around the city, stopping my car to take the pictures that would become **DARK RAIN**'s landscape. We also made sure, in the spirit of things, that we reproduced Emmitt and Dabny's drunken bar scene with an eye for accuracy. (NOTE: Midwestern heireesses really go for a guy with a British accent!)

Today's America has become strikingly uniform. From California to New Jersey, Michigan to Mississippi, nearly identical streets are lined with the same stores, the same food, the same music, and the same lack of soul. What Simon Gane captured is that New Orleans is one of the last places in America that is truly unique, that is both rich in history and culture and yet fully alive today. It is not expendable. It is treasure. And if we lose New Orleans, we lose an essential part of America.

And that's why I wanted to tell this story, a story about the importance of keeping hope in the bleakest moments, of believing in second chances when the first chance is obliterated. My hope is that **DARK RAIN** will help us never to forget the battle that America fought during that week in August, 2005 — a battle not against wind and water, but for our soul.

— Mat Johnson

DARK RAIN: A New Orleans Story

From Mat Johnson, writer of the acclaimed **INCONEGRO**, comes a graphic novel thriller set in the days after Hurricane Katrina. In stores August 18.



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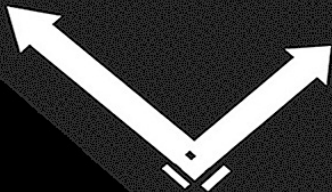
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*The
Unresurrected*